

URGING SUPPORT FOR PASSAGE OF ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS LOWER DRUG COSTS NOW ACT

(Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I am proud to be voting today for the passage of the Elijah E. Cummings Lower Drug Costs Now Act, a bill to lower healthcare costs by allowing Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices for certain high-cost drugs.

I am even prouder that H.R. 3 will reinvest the savings from these drug negotiations into a transformational expansion of Medicare benefits, which includes routine vision, hearing, and dental care.

I have fought for years to include these critical services in my Seniors Have Eyes, Ears, and Teeth Act because they will prevent healthcare costs and suffering due to senior accidents, falls, cognitive impairment, oral cancer, and increased chronic conditions.

Most importantly, giving our older adults the gift of hearing, vision, and oral health would go a long way to helping them enjoy their golden years free from depression and social isolation.

It is time to recognize total healthcare for our seniors must include adequate access to vision, hearing, and dental services.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 3.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL GUARD ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. SPANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SPANO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to wish a happy birthday to the National Guard and all servicemembers, past and present.

Established in 1636, our Nation's first militia units organized in the Massachusetts Bay Colony and were referred to as Minutemen during the Revolutionary War.

Today, the Army and Air National Guard are made up of 184,000 heroes who bravely stepped up to defend our freedom.

They made history by forming one of the first all-African American units during the Civil War. They contributed 50,000 personnel following the 9/11 attacks. As I speak, they help secure our southern borders.

More importantly, the National Guard sets itself apart as each member is sworn to uphold two constitutions, both Federal and State.

Most of us are familiar with Guard units helping communities deal with floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, snowstorms, and other emergencies. But in times of civil unrest, the citizens of a State can rest assured that the Guard will be ready, if needed.

These incredible Americans deserve to be recognized and celebrated for their long and continued service to our Nation. So on behalf of a grateful Nation, I thank them for their sacrifice and commitment.

ANTI-SEMITISM THREATENS OUR COUNTRY

(Mr. GOTTHEIMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Madam Speaker, I rise today because violent anti-Semitism continues to threaten our country, including in my home State of New Jersey.

Investigations are still underway, but I was devastated to learn that the victims in a kosher market in Jersey City, New Jersey, were likely targeted because they were Jewish.

All Americans should be outraged when fellow citizens are targeted simply because of their religion. The Anti-Defamation League has reported that anti-Semitism remains at near historic levels, with New Jersey ranked third in the Nation last year.

We must stand together now to denounce hate targeted at anyone and prevent more violence.

New Jersey stands together to honor the police officers harmed in the attack, who were doing what they do every single day, getting our backs, especially Detective Joseph Seals, a wonderful father of five beautiful children and a 15-year police veteran who gave his own life protecting his community.

We mourn with his loved ones, and our prayers are with the officers and community members still recovering.

Together, as one New Jersey, and as Americans, I know we can combat this hate, which has no place in our community, in the State of New Jersey, or in our country.

May God continue to bless the people of Jersey City, the State of New Jersey, and the United States of America.

HONORING THE LIFE OF COLONEL JOHN EDWARD GRAY

(Mr. BUDD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BUDD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of retired Colonel John Edward Gray of Mount Ulla, North Carolina, who passed away earlier this month at age 94.

Colonel Gray was born in Cleveland, North Carolina, on August 24, 1925, and went on to serve in five campaigns against the Japanese in the Pacific theater in World War II.

Following the war, he returned home and resumed his education at Davidson College. After he graduated in 1949, he served again in both the Korean and Vietnam wars.

Selfless, legendary, valiant are all the words that come to mind when

thinking about all that this man accomplished in his life.

Colonel Gray is survived by his wife of 72 years, Sue, and his 5 children, 12 grandchildren, and 1 great-grandchild.

Madam Speaker, please join me in honoring the life of Colonel John Edward Gray.

TOWNHALLS ESSENTIAL TO CONGRESSIONAL WORK

(Mr. DELGADO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DELGADO. Madam Speaker, I rise today because tomorrow I will be holding my 33rd townhall since being sworn in, with three in each of the 11 counties making up my district.

I promised my constituents that I would be transparent, accountable, and accessible. New York Congressional District 19 is nearly 8,000 square miles, larger than Connecticut and Rhode Island combined. In the past year, we spent hours in the car, driving in the rain, snow, and sleet to meet folks where they are.

We have held townhalls in fire departments, schools, small businesses, and theaters, and even had crowds spilling into the hallway. When the broadband signal was strong enough, the entire conversation was streamed on Facebook Live.

These open forums are essential to my work to represent our district. That is how democracy is supposed to work: civil conversations with my constituents, finding common ground, and concluding with legislation reflecting the needs of the community.

Townhalls are a true highlight of my first year in office, and we are just getting started. I look forward to meeting more folks tomorrow at the Highland Middle School in Ulster.

COMMEMORATING 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF GARDEN CITY

(Miss RICE of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Miss RICE of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the founding of my hometown, Garden City, New York.

As the first planned suburban community in the United States, the village of Garden City is steeped in history.

Home to Mitchel Air Force Base, Garden City has played a critical role in our Nation's aviation industry. It was here where our Nation's first fighter pilots trained during World War I. During World War II, the airbase played a pivotal role in defending our Nation's Eastern seaboard and later served as a staging ground for the European air campaign against Nazi Germany.

Garden City is also at the epicenter of countless cultural and tourist attractions on Long Island, including the

Garden City Hotel, which today continues to serve thousands of visitors attending thoroughbred races at Belmont race track.

On a more personal note, Garden City is also a community that welcomed my family with open arms. It was in Garden City where my father, the eldest son of an Irish immigrant, ran a successful construction company, where my parents raised me and my nine brothers and sisters, and where I first learned about the importance of public service and civic engagement.

Garden City is a wonderful community filled with wonderful people. I am proud to join my friends, family, and neighbors in celebrating its 150th anniversary.

LOWER DRUG COSTS NOW ACT OF 2019

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. DELBENE). Pursuant to House Resolution 758 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3.

Will the gentlewoman from Texas (Mrs. FLETCHER) kindly take the chair.

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3) to establish a fair price negotiation program, protect the Medicare program from excessive price increases, and establish an out-of-pocket maximum for Medicare part D enrollees, and for other purposes, with Mrs. FLETCHER (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Wednesday, December 11, 2019, 60 minutes remained in general debate.

The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) each have 30 minutes remaining.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Chair, I yield myself 1 minute.

Madam Chair, with this legislation, Democrats are fulfilling our pledge to the American people in passing legislation that will bring down prescription drug costs for the people. That is one of the three central pillars of our For the People Agenda.

With H.R. 3, the Elijah E. Cummings Lower Drug Costs Now Act, we are delivering for the people. This legislation, named in memory of my dear friend and our colleague, Elijah Cummings, who fought so hard to lower the cost of prescription drugs, will give Medicare the power to negotiate directly with drug companies, which will help bring drug prices down, as we do now, Madam Chair, for our veterans.

It will make those lower drug prices available to Americans with private in-

surance as well—not just Medicare, but with private insurance—and it will create a new out-of-pocket limit of \$2,000, a cap on out-of-pocket expenses for prescription drugs for those on Medicare part D.

According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, H.R. 3 will save American taxpayers approximately half a trillion dollars over the next 10 years.

Now, H.R. 3 reinvests those savings, Madam Chair, in key initiatives, including expanding Medicare benefits to cover dental, vision, and hearing services; investing in new research, treatment, and cures; and combating the opioid crisis—all three objectives that the American public overwhelmingly support.

President Trump, Madam Chair, promised in 2016, before his election, that he would work to negotiate lower drug prices, something this bill would give his administration the authority to do. For that reason, he ought to support it.

He said in 2016: “When it comes time to negotiate the cost of drugs, we are going to negotiate like crazy.” He said that in a campaign setting. Hopefully, he still believes that today.

I hope he will join in encouraging the Senate to take up H.R. 3, because in 2018, he said this: “One common cancer drug is nearly seven times as expensive for Medicare as it is for other countries. . . . This happens because the government pays whatever price the drug companies set without any negotiation whatsoever.” So said President Trump on October 25, 2018.

He went on to say just 2 months ago, in October: “. . . we want to bring our prices down to what other countries are paying, or at least close. . . .”

Madam Chair, that is what this legislation does.

President Trump went on to say: “. . . and let the other countries pay more. Because they’re setting such low prices that we’re actually subsidizing other countries, and that’s just not going to happen anymore.”

Those were remarks before the Cabinet meeting on October 16, 2019, just a few weeks ago.

That is what this legislation does. That is why the Senate ought to pass this legislation and the President ought to sign it. I hope he will join us in encouraging the Senate to take up H.R. 3 without delay and pass it. And I urge the President to reverse his opposition to this bill and sign it, his opposition being totally inconsistent with those three quotes that I just articulated.

Too many Americans, Madam Chair, are struggling to pay for their prescription drugs. I have heard awful stories from constituents in my district, as I know every one of us has, about families rationing insulin and having to forego rent or food or other necessities in order to pay for their prescription drugs. That is not an option. Without them, their health will deteriorate, and, yes, they may die.

One senior from Clinton, Maryland, in my district, wrote to tell me that one of her prescription drugs more than doubled in price, and she left the pharmacy empty-handed because she couldn’t afford it.

With H.R. 3, we can bring relief to people like her.

With H.R. 3, we can lower the cost of prescription drugs so that Americans can live healthy lives and pursue their American Dream.

Madam Chair, I want to thank Chairman PALLONE, Chairman NEAL, Chairman SCOTT, and their committees for working hard on this bill to help Americans lower their prescription drug costs and live longer and healthier lives.

Madam Chair, this should not be a partisan issue. The President articulated the desire to achieve the objective of bringing prices down. That is what this bill does. That is what CBO says it does. So I urge my colleagues to support this.

Now, Madam Chair, I know you could do this, but I want to do it because I am so proud not only of HALEY STEVENS herself, who is an extraordinary Member of the Congress of the United States, a wonderful member of the previous administration, and somebody who has worked in the private sector and the public sector and who has been elected president of your class, Madam Chair, the freshman class, an extraordinary group of 63 people, 64 if we count our friend CONOR LAMB who was elected in a special election just before you—and he, of course, lords it over you that he is a senior member of the freshman class; I understand that.

But HALEY STEVENS leads an extraordinary group of 64 people who have contributed so much to our society already in their lives, in their productive, constructive lives, and now have come to the Congress. And they came with a promise to do three things, at least:

Number one, to help with wages and jobs and opportunities;

Number two, to bring prescription costs down; and

Number three, to invest in infrastructure.

In this bill, we meet one-third of those promises, and they have made it possible.

Madam Chair, I yield the balance of my time to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. STEVENS), the president of the freshman class, so she may manage the remainder of the time.

Ms. STEVENS. Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALDEN. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I appreciate the distinguished majority leader’s comments about President Trump.

I have been around Congress for 21 years, and I have never seen a President of either party lean more forward in trying to get down the cost of prescription drugs, to give taxpayers more of their hard-earned income, to get an